



DAWN BUCKINGHAM
STATE SENATOR

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**Senator Dawn Buckingham Statement on SB 1424
to Stop Potential Grand Jury Abuse**

In criminal cases involving adult felonies, grand jury proceedings were created to protect citizens against an overzealous government. These procedures were originally meant to provide a checks and balances against oppressive prosecution, or potential witch hunts.

Today, however, those proceedings sometimes give state prosecutors an unfair advantage over the accused. Even when the accused are innocent of any crime.

Consider this: you are accused of a serious crime and given very little notice before you have to appear before a closed-door, secret grand jury proceeding. You are compelled to answer questions without an opportunity to speak to your attorney or even get a legal explanation of any confusing terms you may not understand. Every word you speak is recorded, or transcribed, but no one else's - regardless of what is said, implied or possibly stated as a fact.

In other words, there's no complete record for your attorney to later review if you are falsely accused and indicted of a serious crime. I think this is wrong.

It's time to level the playing field and that's why I have filed Senate Bill 1424.

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